



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

ASHLAND, BAYFIELD, BURNETT, DOUGLAS, IRON, PRICE, RUSK, SAWYER, TAYLOR, WASHBURN

September
2004

Unemployment Declines in Region and State

County unemployment rates declined in 49 of the state's 72 counties in August and four of those counties were in Northwest Wisconsin. Four other northwestern counties reported an increase in unemployment rate during the month while in two counties the unemployment rates did not change.

The combined northwest area unemployment rate dropped from 4.7 percent in July to 4.6 percent in

August and was down from the 5.1 percent rate of one year ago. Unemployment rates below those of one year ago were common in the state. Seven of the ten counties in the region, as well as 65 in the state, reported rates lower than last August.

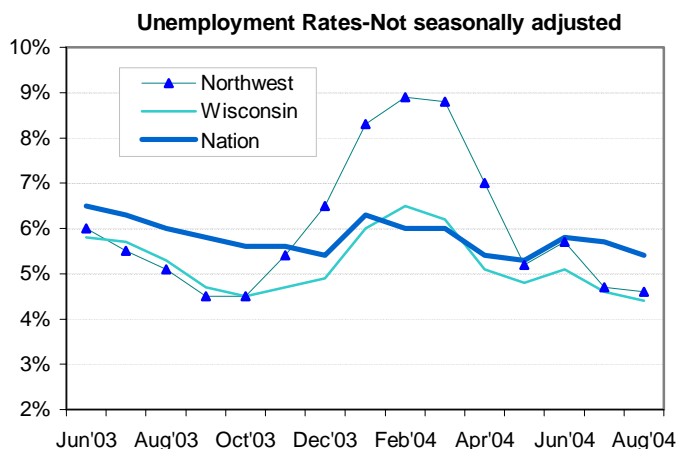
The unemployment rate in Northwest Wisconsin dropped when the count of those out of work fell by 115 to 4,565. However, as often happens in August,

the number of those with jobs in the region also declined from 95,390 to 93,950. A reduction in both elements of the labor force means that the total labor force, after breaking the 100,000 mark last month, shrunk to 98,515 in August.

The State of Wisconsin unadjusted unemployment rate in August was 4.4 percent down from 4.6 percent in July. Washburn and Taylor counties also reported August unemployment rates of 4.4 percent while three northwest counties had rates below the state. In Burnett County the unemployment rate was 4.2 percent; in Price it was 4.0 percent; and in Sawyer the August unemployment rate was 3.5 percent.

All counties in Northwest Wisconsin reported a drop in the number of residents with jobs in August but only two, Ashland and Taylor, showed an increase in the number who were unemployed. A decline in jobholders often occurs in August as many temporary summer jobs end.

The greatest reduction in jobs in August occurred in government



	Jun'03	Jul'03	Aug'03	Jun'04	Jul'04	Aug'04
Northwest	6.0%	5.5%	5.1%	5.7%	4.7%	4.6%
Wisconsin	5.8%	5.7%	5.3%	5.1%	4.6%	4.4%
Nation	6.5%	6.3%	6.0%	5.8%	5.7%	5.4%

Civilian Labor Force Estimates* for Northwest Wisconsin counties: August 2004

	Ashland			Bayfield			Burnett			Douglas			Iron		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Labor force	8,989	9,126	8,802	8,153	8,322	7,893	8,206	8,399	8,210	23,990	24,144	23,612	3,436	3,458	3,418
Employed	8,436	8,586	8,186	7,763	7,901	7,533	7,865	8,052	7,951	22,808	22,949	22,332	3,229	3,243	3,201
Unemployed	553	540	616	390	421	360	341	347	259	1,182	1,195	1,280	207	215	217
% unemployed	6.2	5.9	7.0	4.8	5.1	4.6	4.2	4.1	3.2	4.9	4.9	5.4	6.0	6.2	6.3

	Price			Rusk			Sawyer			Taylor			Washburn		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Labor force	7,242	7,341	7,162	7,083	7,324	6,927	11,411	11,626	10,871	11,348	11,567	11,277	8,656	8,759	8,553
Employed	6,955	7,048	6,754	6,745	6,946	6,565	11,016	11,195	10,389	10,854	11,088	10,798	8,278	8,378	8,063
Unemployed	287	293	408	338	378	362	395	431	482	494	479	479	378	381	490
% unemployed	4.0	4.0	5.7	4.8	5.2	5.2	3.5	3.7	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.4	4.3	5.7

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimates for Northwest Wisconsin: Current month - August 2004

(Employment in thousands)	Ashland			Bayfield			Burnett			Douglas			Iron		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Total Nonfarm	9.0	9.1	8.9	4.4	4.4	4.3	5.1	5.2	5.3	17.7	17.9	17.5	2.3	2.3	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.4
Manufacturing	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3
Trade	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	3.2	3.2	3.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Transportation & Utilities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	1.7	1.7	1.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.7	2.5	2.5	2.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	3.0	3.0	3.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total Government	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.3	2.5	2.2	0.4	0.4	0.4

	Price			Rusk			Sawyer			Taylor			Washburn		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Total Nonfarm	6.6	6.6	6.4	5.8	5.9	5.7	7.6	7.7	7.2	9.3	9.3	9.3	6.3	6.4	6.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.6	0.6	0.6	2.8	2.9	2.9	0.9	1.0	1.0
Trade	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.0
Transportation & Utilities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.2
Financial Activities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Education & Health Services	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8
Leisure & Hospitality	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.8
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.5
Total Government	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.3

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2003 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

with the loss of over 600 jobs. That included jobs with city-sponsored recreation programs, summer school sessions, facility maintenance and cleaning operations, and other government-run camps and recreation sites. One-third of the job reductions in government was in Douglas County.

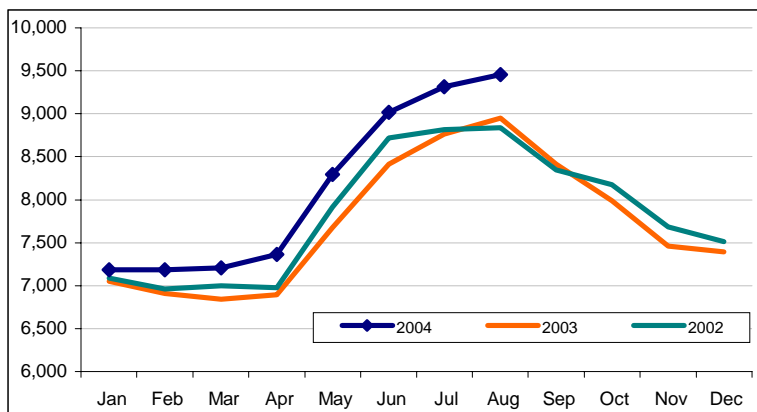
Employers in manufacturing also lost a few jobs in August. The loss this month, however, was much less than reductions in August in the previous two years. Manufacturing employers also added more jobs this summer than were added in the same months in the previous two years. In spite of the increases, the current number of manufacturing jobs of 12,300 remains below the job count from last August of 12,450 and from August 2002 of 12,850.

There were 140 more jobs with leisure and hospitality employers in August. Some of this includes the temporary jobs associated with fairs and festivals

that occur throughout the region in August and are often filled by workers with other jobs. Employment with leisure and hospitality employers peaks in August and this year is 500 higher than one year ago.

Total payroll employment in August of 74,200 was down 600 from July but was 1,100 more than one year ago. Since March, employers have added over 3,700 jobs to the northwest economy. That's the largest increase over the summer months since 2000.

Leisure & Hospitality Jobs in Northwest



The number of claims filed for unemployment compensation benefits are also declining and have been below the 2001 summer activity since mid-June. During the 4-week period ending September 11, 2004 a running average of 1,633 claims were filed for compensation benefits. That is fewer than the 2,208 4-week average for the same period in 2003.



Find the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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